God’s Responsibilities for Man: Responding to the Gospel

Zanesville, OH | September 23, 2018 | Sermon Notes

**Foundational Scripture:** 1 Cor. 1:17

**Intro**:

* Can you imagine if we could respond to the gospel the way we respond to stimuli? The moment any soul comes across the message, the reflexes spring into action and we do what needs to be done. Unfortunately, it doesn’t work that way. Yet that’s no excuse for us not to heed God’s word and the message that underlies it. Everyone in this room has a responsibility to respond to the gospel.

**The Gospel from Start to Finish**

1. **The lost relationship: The Garden**
   1. We were created for relationships (cf. Gen. 2:18-25) but more importantly, we were created to have an intimate relationship with the creator (Ecc. 12:13; Acts 17:24-28).
   2. We often refer to the Garden of Eden to observe a picture of naturalistic beauty. It was serene, peaceful and wonderfully fascinating to the imagination (cf. Gen. 2:8-14). Yet these qualities do not make the garden imagery superior.
   3. Man resided and took care of the garden (cf. Gen. 2:15) but the superior image of the garden is seen in the relationship shared between man and God. God spoke to man directly (cf. Gen. 2:16-17) free from any sin or guilt. That was the good news.
   4. That blessing, the privilege of being one with God was lost when man chose to sin (cf. Gen. 3). God drove them out of the garden and from His presence and thus the relationship was lost (cf. Gen 3:22-24; Rom. 5:12-14)
2. **Building the bridge to God: Noah to Jesus**
   1. Consider the image of a bridge as a description of our relationship with God. A bridge is built so we can get from one side to the other. On one side is sin and evil and its consequences. On the other is salvation, peace and a reward. But that bridge was broken in the garden.
   2. God created a plan (blueprint for the bridge) to bring us over from the side of sin to the side of salvation. It began with Noah and it stretches all the way to the Christ. Through men like Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David etc. God put His plan in motion (Gen. 6:9, 18; 12:2-3; 28:13-15; 49:22-26; Ex. 20; 24; Josh. 24:15; 2 Sam. 7).
   3. From Genesis to Malachi, the blueprint becomes clearer and clearer for the bridge. God through His prophets delivered the good news (Psa. 2:6-12; Isa. 9:6-7; Jer. 23:5-6; Ezek. 34:23-31; 37:24-28; Zech. 6:12-13; 9:9-10).
   4. Enter the story of Jesus. He lived a sinless life, died a cruel death but rose on the third day. Why? He did it all so the bridge could be established and opened (Col. 1:13-14). He paid the toll for the bridge. He did it, so we could get from one side to the other.
3. **God’s plan realized: The Power of God for Salvation to All**
   1. Notice how that from the beginning God’s blueprint for the bridge (the gospel) was rooted in undying love for us. He did it all, so we could walk with Him.
   2. This demonstrates not only the importance of our responsibility to the gospel but the urgency with which we ought to respond. This is also seen in the universal command to repent (cf. Matt. 4:17; Acts 17:30-31).
   3. Understand that the gospel is not discriminating. It as for all men everywhere and it can save any person regardless of what they have done (cf. Rom. 1:16-17).
   4. Responding to the gospel means that we set aside hindrances and our pride, and we give ourselves to God who can change it. It also means that we understand the value of what’s in the message and therefore we are responsible to teach it to others, so they can be saved.

**The Power of the Gospel**

1. Drastic life change as a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17)
2. Access to God’s infinite blessings (Eph. 1:3; 1 Jn. 2:1-2)
3. Eternal life with God in Heaven (Jn. 10:27-29)